



Don Vappie and the Creole Jazz Serenaders

Dedicated to contemporary performance and recording of classic jazz and Creole compositions, Don Vappie's Creole Jazz Serenaders" provide today's audiences with a glimpse of "the real spirit of early jazz," a period when jazz was the "pop" music of the time.

For the group's first recording, CREOLE BLUES, Vappie, with the help of Milly Vappie, a cultural historian and researcher, compiled a song list that includes lesser-known tunes from the likes of Jelly Roll Morton, Jabbo Smith, Sam Morgan, and the New Orleans Owls. Drawing heavily on the Creole heritage of New Orleans, Vappie performs early Creole jazz tunes in the traditional French patois of the region.

Robert Parker, Australian producer and host of the PRI syndicated series, "Jazz Classics in Stereo," sponsored the group's second major project, IN SEARCH OF KING OLIVER In 1997, the CJS recorded 18 classic compositions from Vappie's transcriptions of songs originally recorded in 1923 by King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. Parker described this recording as sounding more like King Oliver's music than anything done in the last 70 years.

In 1998, the CJS, in conjunction with the Historic New Orleans Collection, presented the program "The Lost Manuscripts of Jelly Roll Morton," premiering newly discovered Morton compositions. And in 2003, the CJS performing with the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra in a program entitled "Gumbo," debuted Vappie's arrangements of jazz classics for jazz band and symphony orchestra.

The Creole Jazz Serenaders incorporate the musical legacy of the New Orleans Creole culture, a society that sprang from the mixture of French, Spanish, African and American Indian people with strong ties to the Caribbean Islands. *Offbeat* Magazine chose the CJS debut CD, *Creole Blues*, as one of Louisiana's 100 Essential CDs of the 20th century. Recent recordings include *Swing Out* and *Banjo A La Creole*. CJS is also featured in the PBS documentary AMERICAN CREOLE: NEW ORLEANS REUNION. Recent appearances include Carnegie Hall (NY), the Sheldon Concert Hall (MO), the Whitaker Center (PA) and the Bix Beiderbecke Festival (IA).

With a very real sense of living tradition, CJS breathes new life into classics of a bygone era, without resorting to the kind of self-conscious stiffness often found in historic recreations. Instead, the band delivers to contemporary audiences all the excitement and satisfaction this music first brought to audiences more than 70 years ago.

...Don Vappie and CJS utilize meticulous charts and arrangements to create an orchestrated style of music that swings like no other. This is what the New Orleans jazz and heritage is all about. Michael Dominici, Where Y'At - May 2003

It goes without saying, at least to his fans, that Vappie is someone the world deserves to know better. . .When I first saw Vappie play. . ., my first thought was: "Oh, so the banjo has a Jimi Hendrix." Dave Walker, The Times-Picayune - August 29, 2006

For Booking Information

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